

THE PLACE AND FUNCTION OF THE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

The word "college" as used in this discussion is not to be understood in a technical nor restricted sense, but is employed as a somewhat general term to include those institutions above the grammar grades which aim especially to promote the higher education of youth. It is intended to include not only colleges in the technical sense but also the preparatory departments of many colleges, together with institutions which are sometimes classed as "junior colleges;" but not to include professional schools which exist primarily for the purpose of training specialists.

The term "Christian college" is meant to designate a particular type of educational institution, an institution which is actuated by certain definite aims which do not characterize all schools of higher learning. The use of the term is not intended to imply that other colleges are anti-Christian or even unchristian in any positive sense, but simply to distinguish a particular type from other colleges which, whatever their excellencies, do not undertake, as institutions, the production of a high type of Christian character. When we speak of a Christian college we mean one which is founded and maintained upon the conviction that the production of Christian character is one of the primary ends of the educational program. With these two definitions in mind, we proceed to ask, "What is the place of the Christian college?"

Place of the Christian College

Putting the answer in a single sentence, it may be said that the Christian college is an agency of the church

for the promotion of the kingdom of God through educational processes. Throughout its history the Christian church has placed a large emphasis upon the importance of educational activity as one of the most effective means of evangelizing the world. To this day a large portion, probably about one-half of all the money expended in foreign mission lands is expended for the maintenance of schools and colleges and the support of trained and consecrated teachers, because experience has taught that this is one of the most effective means of accomplishing the work assigned to the church. In our own country, however, there are many who hold that the education of youth should be done and can be better done by the state. If by education is meant nothing more than instruction in the arts and sciences, then we may admit their contention. The real issue appears in the question, "What is education?"

Leaving this question for a moment, all Christians will certainly agree that it is the business of the church to extend the kingdom of God, and probably few will object to the statement that the kingdom cannot be extended by what is popularly called "secular education." A man may know all of the arts and sciences, may be a skilled practitioner in his chosen profession, and yet totally lack those qualities which are essential to citizenship in and to the extension of the kingdom of God. Yet, while it is true that the kingdom is not to be extended by means of secular education, we insist that a true and complete education of youth is one of the most essential factors in the successful accomplishment of the task assigned to the church. Hence, we come back to the question, "What is education?"

What is Education?

For the answer to our question let us turn to the educational world itself. There we find that leading edu-

cators insist with increasing emphasis that the aim of education must be character formation. In his *Philosophy of Teaching*, Arnold Tompkins sums it up in these words: "The true end of teaching is one with the true aim of life." The educators tell us, and tell us truly, that the ultimate aim of education is not knowledge, not power, but knowledge and power used for the highest good of the individual and the race. They are fond of the term, "self-realization." They assert that the aim of education is "to assist immature persons to realize themselves and their destiny as persons," which simply means that these immature persons shall come to possess themselves, control themselves, devote themselves to the attainment of the highest possible goal.

Now, if the purpose of education is properly expressed in this way, and it is, then our definition of what education is will depend upon our conception of the meaning of life. Education aims at the highest goal. Therefore we ask, "What is the highest goal?" The aim of education is that a man shall make the very most of himself. Therefore we are driven back to the familiar first question of the Westminster Confession, "What is the chief end of man?" For the Christian there can be but one answer to these questions. We turn to an old Book which contains the portrait of the Man of Galilee and we reply, "For the individual the highest goal in life is to be a man like that." We read the stories of how he lived and died to serve his fellows and we conclude that for the good of society the world needs men who live and serve as did the Nazarene. Therefore, taking the educators on their own ground, we Christians must say that the end and aim of education is to produce men who, in individual character and social life, are like Jesus Christ; and because ideals are born and conceptions of the meaning of life are absorbed and characters are actually formed in and by the educative

process, we must, to be true to our mission, maintain schools where, during the plastic years of adolescence, the mold shall be a Christian mold and the graving tool shall be Christian influence.

The Function of the Christian College

If we have properly located the Christian college in the general scheme by which the church seeks to discharge its obligations, we may next ask, "How shall the Christian college proceed to discharge the duty which rests upon it?" The answer is, not by trying to fill some other place; not by becoming primarily an evangelistic organization; not by turning its recitations into prayer-meetings or its lectures into sermons; but by *providing a religious education*. Let no one think that the writer would discourage prayer-meetings in college or that he means to intimate that there should be no evangelistic efforts among students. There should be much prayer, and special evangelistic meetings at least once a year might well be a feature of all Christian colleges, as they are of some; but the college is an educational institution and its great contribution to the progress of the kingdom should be through educational processes. It will best fill its place when, by all the means at its command, it provides not only an education of the head and of the hand, but also the education of the heart. This does not mean mere instruction in things religious, valuable as such instruction may be, but the development of the spiritual life as a part of the educative process.

There are those who seem to think that there is no such thing as religious education. Many talk as if the business of educating a youth and the business of developing his spiritual nature were separate and distinct enterprises, having nothing in common. They seem not to realize that the development of the spiritual life is an

essential part of education itself. Indeed, many seem to think of a child as composed of several distinct parts—a “bundle of faculties,” as it used to be expressed. They talk as if one part of a youth were to be sent to school to be educated and another part taken now and then to church for the good of his spiritual life, as if the school were responsible for one section of him and the church for another; and it is the logical conclusion of such a view that the church has nothing to do with education.

The Unity of Education

The view which draws a sharp line of distinction between the spiritual life of a youth and all the rest of his life is radically and fundamentally erroneous. It ignores the unity of education and the unity of the youth to be educated. The whole process of developing a child, and this is what education is, must necessarily be one process, just because the child himself is a unit. We cannot separate him into parts however much we may desire to do so. He is not a body plus a mind plus a heart plus a will; he is just a human being in the making, and whatever influences are brought to bear upon him are brought to bear upon the *whole of him*. Whether the school aims to do so or not, whether or not it knows what it is doing, it is not merely instructing an intellect; it is actually making a man—some kind of a man. The vital question that we have to consider is this: “What kind of men are our schools making?” Whether or not a school recognizes the need of a religious education, it actually shapes the spiritual nature of each child within the range of its influence. Hence each school necessarily takes some part in providing a religious, or an irreligious, education. As Dr. George A. Coe has pertinently said: “To receive no religious impression at all is exactly equivalent to receiving an impression that religion is unimportant,” and one

impression or the other concerning the importance of religion is being made by every school in the land. The function of the Christian college is not merely to make the impression that religion is important—essential, rather—but so to develop the religious impulse, the spiritual nature, that the personality shall be molded into Christian character, the life inspired by Christian ideals and actuated by Christian principles.

In the face of all the marvelous educational development of recent years, one could wish that we might go back two generations and get the point of view of that New England prophet, Horace Bushnell. From his "Christian Nurture" these words are taken: "All society is organic—the church, the state, the school, the family; and *there is a spirit in each of these organisms peculiar to itself*, and more or less hostile, more or less favorable to religious character, and to some extent at least sovereign over the individual man." This is a profound truth. There is a spirit in each organism, and its spirit is largely responsible for the shaping of the spirit of the individual who comes within the sphere of its influence. A recent English writer, George Steven, in his "Psychology of the Christian Soul," tells us that the main difference between the best and the worst personalities "is in the choice by another hand than their own of the circumstances which shall play upon them in youth, out of which spring the thoughts, feelings, acts of choice and efforts which make the man," and he adds: "*That choice by another hand is education.*" He is right. The spiritual environment which shapes and develops the spirit within a man is the most important factor in education, for it is the spirit, the personality, the self, the soul,—however we please to express it,—which dominates mind and body and determines whether the youth shall become a real man or something less. As Dr. Faunce of Brown University puts it, "The boy's purely mental

part, if we could separate it, is not what most needs education. It is the sentiments, the hidden sources of character, that most need training. Those sentiments are the driving wheels of the soul." And again he says, "The central task of education is the training of the will." Yes, the dominant aim of education must be the education of the spirit, and this is what we mean when we talk of religious education.

A Need Long Recognized

It is somewhat remarkable that there should be any difference of opinion on this subject, for the importance of such an education has been recognized by great thinkers of all ages, whether Christian or not. In ancient times Plato and Aristotle urged that the chief thing in education is that the young soul should learn with all its heart to love good and hate evil—not merely to *know* but to *love*. Herbert Spencer wrote that "to educate reason without educating desire is like selling a repeating rifle to a savage," which is but a picturesque way of stating that training the mind without putting right purposes into the heart is only strengthening and arming an enemy of the ideals of a Christian society. A classic definition of education is that left us by Professor Huxley, who would probably not be accused of speaking as a Christian partisan. He said: "Education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of nature, under which name I include not merely things and their forces but men and their ways, and the fashioning of the affections and will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws." What Mr. Huxley called the laws of nature we prefer to speak of as the laws of God; therefore we can heartily assent to his definition. Now, all schools instruct the intellect concerning things and their forces. That is science. All schools instruct

concerning men and their ways—the humanities, history, language, literature. But do all schools undertake to fashion the affections and will of their pupils into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with the laws of God?

Can we say that two schools are just alike because each teaches English and science and mathematics and the rest, using the same books and having teachers of equal ability? We forget that not one of these subjects of itself influences the spirit of the youth toward a life which is in harmony with the laws of God. A devil may be as good a mathematician as an angel. We forget, too, that each school is an organism; that each has a spirit; that the most powerful influence on the growing spirit of a youth is his spiritual environment, and that there is a contradiction that cannot be reconciled between the secularist and the Christian understanding of the meaning and goal of life. The only kind of school which can do effectively what the church is commissioned to do in the world is not an organism minus religion, not even an organism with a religious appendage, *but an institution which is itself a religious community*, existing not merely to impart knowledge of things and their forces and of men and their ways, but that its students may go forth with their affections and wills so fashioned that they will live in harmony with the will of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Such schools the world must have if ever the kingdom of God shall come, and therefore the church exerts itself to maintain the Christian college.

Where State Schools Fall Short

It is sometimes assumed that the expenditure of an equal amount of energy in behalf of the religious development of students at state institutions would produce an equal or superior result, but this is to overlook entirely

the inescapable effect of what Bushnell called the "Spirit of the organism." The writer is in the heartiest sympathy with all wise efforts for the moral and spiritual education of students at universities and other state institutions and believes that the church ought to do much more than ever it has done to provide what is omitted from the university program, in most cases omitted because of laws which prohibit state institutions from attempting religious education. But we must face the fact that religious education is omitted from the programs of state institutions. Therefore it cannot be part of the aim and purpose of such institutions, cannot possibly enter into the "spirit of organism," and cannot possibly be made to appear to the student as an essential part of a complete education. Let us do our best to supply the lack of state institutions, but let us confess that in so doing we are compelled to violate the principle of educational unity and are forced to practice, though we may not subscribe to, the doctrine that the school is to deal with one part of the person and the church with another part. Theoretically and practically the only kind of an educational institution which can even approach unto perfection in doing what ought to be done from the Christian point of view is an organism which recognizes the religious element as an essential part of the one whole educational process.

The somewhat superficial objection is sometimes raised that if the preceding argument is sound it applies with equal force to the grade school and high school. The application of the argument depends, however, not so much upon the academic grade attained by a pupil as upon the extent to which his own spirit is influenced by the spirit and purpose of the institution he attends. Below the high school period most students live at home. The grade school is an assistant of the family in the education of the child rather than a substitute for the

family. This is rapidly coming to be true of the high school, which is now to be found in so many communities, though there are still hundreds of thousands of boys and girls who must stop with the grade school or go away from home for further educational advantages—a powerful, practical reason why Christian colleges should maintain preparatory departments in spite of the objections from a pedagogical point of view. But, with few exceptions, when the student is ready for college he *must* go away from home. He is not yet a man, merely a man in the making. Deprived of home influences, guidance, stimulus, his deepest needs will be supplied and his religious education adequately continued only as the institution which henceforth is to shape and mold his life is in some adequate measure a real substitute for the Christian home and stands *in loco parentis*. No institution can possibly be such a substitute if obliged to omit from its purpose and program the training of heart and conscience and will; but just such training is recognized as an essential part of the education provided by the Christian college.

The Christian College a Witness

Aside altogether from its splendid achievements in the kind of men and women it gives the world, achievements which are set forth in many other publications, the Christian college stands today as a witness to the faith of the church that education is incomplete without religion. Sir Robert Pell once said that “secular education is only half an education with the more important half left out,” and to bear witness to this truth and influence other educational institutions to accept it as truth is an important reason for the existence of the Christian college. It is hardly too much to say that the church taught the state to educate its youth. The church also taught the state

to provide for religious liberty, in consequence of which the state properly excludes sectarian teaching from the public schools. The next great task before the church is to teach the state that, while sectarian instruction is properly excluded, religious education is absolutely essential to the accomplishment of the very aim which the state has in view when it expends vast sums of money for the maintenance of public schools—the production of citizens of the highest and most useful type. When that time comes it may be no longer necessary to maintain church schools. But that time has not yet come and it seems to be still far in the future.

Our public schools do not now undertake, as organisms, to provide anything in the nature of a religious education. No men see this fact more clearly than some of the leaders of public education. For instance, Dr. W. O. Thompson, President of the Ohio State University, said in 1913: “The atmosphere in which a boy is educated counts for much. I am in no way untrue to state institutions when I say that in our day a boy might become a bachelor or a master in almost any one of the best of them and be as ignorant of the Bible, the moral and spiritual truth which it represents and the fundamental principles of religion, their nature and value to society, as if he had been educated in a non-Christian country.” And he added the pertinent question, “Who is to supply this lack if not the Christian college?” The Christian college not only undertakes to supply the lack referred to, but its very existence bears testimony to the deep conviction of multitudes of the best citizens of our country that it is absolutely essential that the education of our children shall include what Mr. Huxley named “the fashioning of the affections and will into a loving and earnest desire” to move in harmony with the will of God.

It is not merely for instruction in things religious

that these institutions are maintained, but for religious education. This is not a distinction without a difference. The difference is fundamental. Recently a lament was heard concerning the lack of knowledge of "the historic facts of Christianity" on the part of students in college. We may well share the lament and wish that all students knew much more about the historic facts of Christianity; but mere knowledge of historic facts of any kind is not religious education. We may join, also, in the oft expressed desire that students in our schools knew more about the Bible, and it is gratifying to realize that in most Christian colleges the Bible is taught as a part of the regular curriculum required of every student. Yet mere knowledge of the Bible, especially if it be merely knowledge of the Bible as history or as literature, while it may be incidentally is not essentially religious education. The function of the Christian college involves far more than to impart a knowledge of sacred things. Its task is to lay hold upon the spirit at the same time that it lays hold upon the body and the mind of the growing person and develop the whole personality so that he shall not only be instructed concerning things and their forces and men and their ways but that he shall also come into harmonious adjustment to his spiritual environment and be prepared to devote his life to the establishment of the kingdom of truth and righteousness.

Religion is an attitude of life. The inherent function of education is to change, direct or modify life. Therefore religion—or irreligion—is vitally interwoven with educational processes, and religion is essential in an education that is complete. It is objected sometimes that "religion can not be taught for religion is a life." Granted that religion is a life. Yet two things are true. First, if a particular student lacks that life, it is the province of education to seek to lead him into its possession. This is one of the aims of such educa-

tional agencies as the Sunday School, and many other Christian educational institutions count such results as among their most praiseworthy achievements. Secondly, that life when it is possessed is at first little more than an impulse. In the language of scripture and of the church, its possessor is but a babe. Turn such a child out among savages and see what will happen. Has education nothing to do here? Just as a part of the business of education is to develop the mind, so another part of its business is to develop the spiritual life until the man as a whole moves in harmony with the laws of God. The religious life is essentially an attitude of the spirit toward God and toward men. It may be called the reaction of the spirit of man to the stimulation of the infinite spirit. Can the spirit not be trained to react? Can it not be helped to assume the right attitude? There is an advertisement familiar to all—a dog sitting before a horn whence issues “his master’s voice.” If a dog can be trained to recognize his master’s voice and to respond to its appeal, can we not lead a boy into the knowledge of his Master’s voice and help him to know and to do his Father’s will? We can and we must; and to do this is part of the task of religious education; part of the high function of the Christian college.

The great lack in the life of today is not intellectual, not professional, but moral, and the greatest possible force to remedy this defect is a true and vital religious education. “Knowledge is power,” we say. Yes; so is electricity power; but the use of the power depends upon the will of him who uses it. Given the will and the touch of a button may dispel pestilential darkness with a flood of light. But given another kind of will and by the turning of a switch warm hearts cease to beat, bright eyes grow glassy and the horrors of miserable death succeed in a flash the beauty of life. It’s not in the power; it’s in the will. It is not knowledge of things and their

forces, of men and their ways, that constitutes an education. Knowledge is but a tool. A man is a spirit, developed into harmony with God and his laws. Leave the spirit undeveloped and we have a child still, unable to use the tool that we seek to place in his hand. Develop that spirit so that God is not all his thoughts and we have an enemy of society who will use the tool against us. But develop that spirit in such a manner that the controlling motive of his life is an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with the laws of God and we have a MAN who will use the tool that is placed in his hands for the blessing of society and the promotion of the kingdom of God. To produce men of this type is the mission of the Christian church, and to fulfill its mission it must maintain and enlarge and perfect the Christian college.

This book is a preservation photocopy.
It is made in compliance with copyright law
and produced on acid-free archival
60# book weight paper
which meets the requirements of
ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992 (permanence of paper)

Preservation photocopying and binding
by

Acme Bookbinding
Charlestown, Massachusetts



2000

THE PLACE AND FUNCTION OF THE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

The word "college" as used in this discussion is not to be understood in a technical nor restricted sense, but is employed as a somewhat general term to include those institutions above the grammar grades which aim especially to promote the higher education of youth. It is intended to include not only colleges in the technical sense but also the preparatory departments of many colleges, together with institutions which are sometimes classed as "junior colleges;" but not to include professional schools which exist primarily for the purpose of training specialists.

The term "Christian college" is meant to designate a particular type of educational institution, an institution which is actuated by certain definite aims which do not characterize all schools of higher learning. The use of the term is not intended to imply that other colleges are anti-Christian or even unchristian in any positive sense, but simply to distinguish a particular type from other colleges which, whatever their excellencies, do not undertake, as institutions, the production of a high type of Christian character. When we speak of a Christian college we mean one which is founded and maintained upon the conviction that the production of Christian character is one of the primary ends of the educational program. With these two definitions in mind, we proceed to ask, "What is the place of the Christian college?"

Place of the Christian College

Putting the answer in a single sentence, it may be said that the Christian college is an agency of the church

CUST LOT NO 20702		ITEM NO.	DEPARTMENT	CATEGORY	BINDING CLASS
ACCOUNT ID.	TITLE ID	COLLECTION	LEVEL	SPINE LETTERING PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT	
13				The Place And Function of the Christian College Clarke	
NAME		☐ SAVE TITLE (NEW) ☐ PERMANENT CHANGE			
Ohio St. U		☐ BIND FREE			
BINDING CLASS CIRCLE ONE ONLY 01 PERIODICAL CUSTOM (F+B ADS OUT) 02 PERIODICAL STANDARD (ADS IN) 03 PERIODICAL BUDGET 04 PERIODICAL LUMBRID 05 BOOK/PAPERBACK ADHESIVE BIND 06 PRESERV. PHOTOCOPY ADHESIVE BIND 07 BOOK/PAPERBACK-SEWING OPTION 08 BOOK/PAPERBACK-CLASSIC RECASE					
JOB 26540		SERIAL 5			
					
54 005					
RETAIN SEWING DO NOT TRIM SEW THRU FOLD BIND AS IS					

SET OF		DATE SENT	
COVER COLOR 55		7/18/80	
PRINT COLOR		HUB SENT	
GOLD		SAMPLE SENT	
BLACK		PANEL LINES	
WHITE			

BINDER USE ONLY							
OR	NE	HF	CF	PF			
AR	AF	RR	RF	TF	TR		
TOP	0	1	1	4			
BOTTOM	0	1	1	4			
FRONT	0	1	1	4			
BE	BS	EC	PA				
F	HA	HL	HP				
MB	MF	MS	KP				
ML	MI	OC	FP				
P	PT	SC	AT				
PC	PK	PL	PM				
PP	PV	P3	P5				
en	ec	cu	RL				

1375 OF ABOVE BOOKBINDING